Some Wholesome
COVNSELLS
AND
Directions

Drawn up, and Given out by Occasion of the Present

PLAGUE;

Specially for the benefit of such Poore Families and Persons, as either now are or have been visited therewith, and are Recovered.

London, Printed, 1665.

Some wholesome Counsells and Directions drawn up and given out by occasion of the present *Plague*, &c.

FRiends and Fellow Subjects, who have been Sufferers under this sad and heavy judgement which the righteous God hath inflicted this Summer upon London *and* England, *in many parts and places of it; These ensuing Lines now presented to you are an extract out of a Letter lately written to some Christian Freinds and acquaintance: Wherein the Authour expressed his hearty wishes, that some or other well-affected Person would be at the cost to have it printed, and sent out to such Persons and Families, for their Soules benefit. This wish of the Authours, a Merchant in* Olives-hart-street, *J. G. hath set his heart to fulfill; the Lord reward him aboundantly for it, and make this service very successfull to the promoting of the spiritual and eternall welfare of all your soules, in order whereunto both He and the Authour craving your acceptance of the Papers; desire you will Read, and consider seriously what is presented to your View: Which is as followeth,*

I Lately met with a Paper, bearing Mr. *Richard Baxters* name, a large ſheet woven by him not to be a winding Sheet for mens bodies, but rather a ſpiritual winding Sheet for their Souls, to winde them into God and into heaven; if you will you may reckon it to be a Penitential ſheet, woven and wrought to winde poor ſouls into Faith and Repentance, and ſo to Glory: Since that ſheet I have met with other papers of his, which referr partly to the Godly, partly to the wicked, to one and other principally, with reſpect unto this Contagious Peſtilence; in all which he expreſſes much of the good will of him that dwelt in the buſh: Good man of a Piouſly publick ſpirit, wiſhing well to all, hurt to none if he could help it, would have none to Periſh but all to come to Repentance and ſo to Glory, having it ſeems a ſtrong confidence (as well he may) be the numbers never ſo great, of Perſons that get the Poſſeſſion of the Kingdome before himſelf, he ſhall not be prejudiced in the leaſt, as to his own intereſt therein; and I muſt ingeniouſly confeſſe thus much to you, that thoſe ſweet and ſavory Papers of his, which like ſo many Boxes of Precious Ointment broken open, have filled the City and Country with ſuch an Odoriferous and Fragrant ſmell, as hath much refreſht the noſtrils of many, gave me the occaſion to appear in this way, and with him to proſecute

ſecute the ſame deſigne of promoting ſome bene-fit, refreſhment, and comfort, eſpecially to Per-ſons Viſited with the Peſtilence; yet withall ha-ving an ey to others that they might be prepared for it, and corroborated againſt the fears of it, rolling themſelves upon God in the way of a ho-ly confidence; and this is that which with your patience I would apply my ſelf unto: Firſt of all, I would perſwade you, and all my Chriſtian Bre-thren and Friends, not to be over-fearfull of the Plague; it is good to have an awe upon our ſpi-rits, and a trembling frame of heart in the Pre-ſence of our Father, when the Rod is in his hand, and he exerciſing his ſeverity upon thoſe that are in his great Family; but not be too much of a diſpondent ſpirit, as too many are who feare and fly: I ſhall not now diſpute the caſe concerning removing into the Country, how farr it may be lawfull, how far not; who may be allowed to provide for their ſafety that way, who not; others have performed that, and for my part I have fa-vourable and friendly thoughts concerning ſuch as do, onely I would have them to conſider; that there is no flying from God; ſo *David*, *Pſal.* 139. *verſe* 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Whither ſhall I go from thy ſpi-rit, or whether ſhall I fly from thy preſence; if I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, & dwell in the uttermoſt parts in the Sea, even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me; if I ſay, ſurely the darkneſs ſhall cover me: even the night ſhall be light about me.* We are further to know

that these Arrows of Pestilence are guided by a divine hand, and are not sent out at a venture at random as the *Syrians* were and *Jehus*, which were directed to *Ahabs* brest, and *Jehorams* back; they are levelled in wisdome and judgment, according to the Counsel of God, he smites whom he pleases, he spares whom he pleases, and both the *Numerus numerans* and the *Numeras numeratus* are with him; It is good therefore to rolle our selves upon God, and to trust him with our lives, and souls, and all our concernments, not fearing the fear of wicked men, but sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, & making him our fear. As touching the Plague, it is in it self and in the nature of it a formidable disease, as might be manifested in sundry respects, as I said, but it is ordered by a divine hand, you may be infected with it, it may be not; if it be so you may recover, its not necessary you should dy, it proves not mortal to all; its thought by many of the learned, that King *Hezekiah* was sick of that Disease, and yet he recovered and lived many years after, and we have proof of it at this very day, by means used; divers are kept from the Grave and raised up again, and among others whom God is pleased to make use of as instruments in his hand to such a purpose, though they be but few; blessed of God be our worthy Doctor *Oaks*, who is eminently active, even to the hazard of himself and Family, for the good and benefit of such as are seized with the Disease, having a freeness of spirit, to apply himself as much to the Poor, as to

those

thoſe of a higher rank; and bleſſed be God not without ſucceſſe, as is well known to many of us at this day; but grant it that the Diſeaſe prove Mortal, and we ſhould fall by the hand of it; if all be well between God and our own ſouls, if we be a pardoned people, juſtified by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, it ſhall be well with us to all eternity, and what if you go to heaven in a ſtorm; the Mariner thinks not the worſe of the haven becauſe a tempeſt hurled him into it; heaven will be never the worſe nor leſſe acceptable to us, nor we the leſſe welcome to it, though we come thither by the means of the Plague: As for ſuch whoſe Families are now Viſited, whether Rich or Poor, Young, or Old, One or Other; I would in more ſpecial manner make my Application to them. Worthy Mr. *Baxter* hath prevented me and performed worthily, and he hath given out wholſome Advice and Directions, Methodizing matters that do more eſpecially concern perſons in that condition; I would ſecond him in a more General way, and what I ſhall now in the cloſing up of my Letter offer out, with reſpect unto Viſited Families and Perſons; I could heartily wiſh that it might be abſtracted from the reſt of my Letter, and tranſmitted to the ſaid Families and Perſons; and why might not ſome well affected perſons that hath a larger Portion of the World then others of their neighbours, be at ſo much coſt to procure, together with Mr. *Baxters* Papers, that which now I ſecond them with, and tranſmit them unto ſuch Fami-

lies and Persons. I have observed, that our Mountebanks can issue out their Papers, and scatter them up and down, that there may be a general cognizance taken of such and such Soveraign Antidotes and Medicaments, as may be beneficial to persons, to whom such Medicaments are most proper, and may prove most beneficial; and this which now I have to express, is the extract which I wish might be made; I would commission such a paper to say, *Peace be unto this House*, and be sure *if the Son or Daughter of Peace be there, the Peace shall rest upon it, notwithstanding the Plague be in it*; and whether it come as a tryal or as a punishment, I would advise them to bid it welcome, accept it, kisse the Rod, and the hand that holds it, drink the cup, which though it may be bitter, yet may prove wholsome and not poisonous in the least; hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it, quarrel not with it, but fall under it, study you to please God in what you do or suffer, and that God may please you in what he orders out, and all will be well. I would aske you concerning your Souls, and Spiritual Conditions; have you not minded God hitherto, nor acquainted yourselves with him, and the Mysteries of his Will, things that concern your Eternal Peace, have you not yet believed, repented; set to it now, and make it your businesse, you may have but a little time to spend in the world, improve it to as good purpose as you can, let not a minute run out to waste; the nearer you are to your journeys end, make the more haste that your work

work may not be to do, when you have no time left to do it in; knowing that there is no Believing, Repenting, self-Humbling, and making peace with God; No, such Work in the Grave whither you are going; be deeply humbled for your neglect of Hearing, Reading, Praying, and other Duties of Godlinesse, and now cry mightily, urge God with his Attributes, and plead thus; Lord thou art stiled a Father of Lights, and wilt thou not send light into my dark soul; thou art the God of all Grace, and shall I dye in a graceless condition; thou gavest Christ, and that of thine own free accord, when there was no moveing of thee in the least to such a purpose, and he hath shed his blood, pacified thy wrath, satisfied thy justice, brought in everlasting righteousnes, and is now at thy right hand to make Intercession for poor sinners, and shall I that now cry for him, fly to him, be never the better for him, not one drop of his blood to purge my conscience; onely by the way let me Animadvert upon that which is the common apprehension and expression of men, that one drop of Christs Blood was sufficient to save a world; for my part I am not clear in that it must be heart blood, life blood that must be shed by him to make an Attonment: but to direct your proceed in the way of your Plea, Lord thou hast given me a natural life and breath, and wilt thou not give me spiritual life and breath; I have the natural senses of hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, and so forth; and Lord shall I be wholy a stranger to spiritual senses,

these

theſe things am not I able to perform in my own behalf, by my own power; Oh put forth thine, make me ſuch as thou wouldſt have me to be, and I ſhall be ſuch; it is ſaid of *Abraham*, thou foundſt him faithfull, and of *David*, thou foundſt him a man after thine own heart, thou wouldſt never have found them ſo, if thou hadſt not made them ſo, make me ſuch and thou ſhalt find me ſuch; thy grace is as ſufficient to pardon, and ſanctifie and renew me, as ever it was for any poor ſinner in the World; If I dye, and damne, and periſh, there is no profit in my blood, the dead praiſe thee not, the damned will not nor can; If I periſh I ſhall never love thee and honour thee; If thou wilt ſave me, I ſhall be a laſting Monument of freeſt love and richeſt Grace and Mercy. Oh then Magnifie thy Mercy upon me, and let me not be Fuel for the burning, but Timber for the building; yet let me further drive and deal with you, and uſe my uttermoſt to faſten my nails in you; you are humane creatures, oh ſee that you be new creatures, you are a part of the firſt Creation that is wofully degenerated and defaced, ſee that you be a part of the ſecond Creation which is performed in Chriſt Jeſus, in whom all Gods acts of Grace are performed; you have natural underſtandings, pray that God would give you ſpiritual underſtandings; *David* fetched an argument from this conſideration, that Gods hand had made him, faſhioned him, and urged in the ſtrength thereof: *Oh give me underſtanding that I may keep thy Teſtimonies*, *Pſal.* 119.

You

You have bodies, but do you not consider that you have souls that are infinitely more to be valued then your bodyes, the losse whereof, the whole world will not countervail; you live a natural life, but do not you know that there is a spiritual life which is infinitely better, look to live that life; you eat and drink daily for the body, there is a spiritual meat and drink provided, which your souls have as much need of, as your bodyes have of the Perishing food, oh make out after that; You are carefull to cloath your bodies, and shall your souls be naked; You prize and study to keep and maintain your outward liberty, spiritual liberty is far better, and will you please your selves in spiritual bondage to sin and the Devil, oh make out after this spiritual liberty, knowing that if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed; You are carefull to maintain your bodily health, and is it good that you should have sick souls; let me aske you, will you love darkness rather then light, sickness rather then health, bondage rather then liberty, death rather then life, your disease better then your Cure, your Plague better then your plaister, will you chose rather to be in the hand of a wounding, killing Devil, then in the hand of a healing, recovering, curing Christ; will you choose rather to be damned and go to Hell, then to be eternally saved and put into the possession of an eternal Mansion above; you are subject to a bodily Plague which may seize you, and it may be hath, know you not there is a worse

worſe Plague, the Plague of the heart, you muſt dye how ſoon you know not; oh look after an intereſt in Chriſt which is the beſt intereſt, look for Faith and free Juſtification, Repentance and Renovation, ſeconded with Real and Univerſal Reformation; get the blood of Chriſt which is the blood of ſprinkling upon your Conſciences, which will purge away your Guilt, bring in Peace, and kill the Worm, which if not killed, will killingly gnaw on you to all Eternity; I ſay again, you muſt dye once, take heed of dying twice; there is a ſecond death and that is the moſt formidable, you muſt dy, but look to this, that death do not kill you, do you kill ſin, and you will kill death too; you muſt dye, but let it be your ſeeing of death as it is ſaid of *Simeon*, *Luke* 2. Let not death ſee you with a Mortifferous killing ſight; you muſt dye, let it be but a taſting of death as the Scripture phraſeth it, let it not devouringly feed on you as it ſhall upon ſome, *Pſalm* 49. Once more you muſt dye, I beſeech you for Gods ſake, for dear Jeſus ſake, for your ſouls ſake, let this be your greateſt care, oh that it may be mine as well as yours, ſee to it that you live before you dye, that you live the life of Grace, before you dye the death of Nature, and then it matters not when, where, how, by what Diſeaſe you dye; you ſhall not dye to dye, but dye to live again, and live to dye no more, but live in the un-interrupted Viſion and interminable fruition of him who is the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the onely wiſe God, the Reſurrection

ſurrection and the Life, the I am, the infinite Being, the All in All. Oh my Friends, let Maſter *Baxters* Counſel and this of mine ſeconding his, let it be acceptable to you and be not ſo cruel to your own ſouls as to neglect ſuch a God, ſuch a Chriſt, ſuch a Goſpel, ſuch a Covenant, and ſuch an Inheritance as is laid up in ſtore for the Saints in Light; who but fools would live without God, without Chriſt, without Faith and Fear, and forgo him and his Chriſt to all Eternity, and be eternally miſerable with Devils and Damned ſouls. After you are dead you muſt have the ſearchers to view your bodies, be you who you will; be you ſearchers to your ſelves and your own Souls, and ſee to it that there be no ſpiritual Feaver Spots, or Plague Spots upon you; If any ſpots, look to it that they be no other then the ſpots of Gods Children; and if you have ſpots, look to it that you be not ſpots, ſuch as *Jude* ſpeaks of; And if the Marks of the Lord Jeſus be upon your ſouls, and not the Mark of the Beaſt and Dragon, whatever Marks and Spots may be found on your Bodies, they may prove Marks of death, but ſhall never prove the Marks of Hell and Damnation: For my part while I am continued on this ſide the Grave, and in Praying-work, my earneſt Prayer for you all ſhall be; that though you may be judged according to men in the Fleſh, yet you may live according to God in the Spirit; and that though your outward Man periſh, that your inward Man may be renewed daily; that though there be a deſtroying

of

worſe Plague, the Plague of the heart, you muſt dye how ſoon you know not; oh look after an intereſt in Chriſt which is the beſt intereſt, look for Faith and free Juſtification, Repentance and Renovation, ſeconded with Real and Univerſal Reformation; get the blood of Chriſt which is the blood of ſprinkling upon your Conſciences, which will purge away your Guilt, bring in Peace, and kill the Worm, which if not killed, will killingly gnaw on you to all Eternity; I ſay again, you muſt dye once, take heed of dying twice; there is a ſecond death and that is the moſt formidable, you muſt dy, but look to this, that death do not kill you, do you kill ſin, and you will kill death too; you muſt dye, but let it be your ſeeing of death as it is ſaid of *Simeon*, *Luke* 2. Let not death ſee you with a Mortifferous killing ſight; you muſt dye, let it be but a taſting of death as the Scripture phraſeth it, let it not devouringly feed on you as it ſhall upon ſome, *Pſalm* 49. Once more you muſt dye, I beſeech you for Gods ſake, for dear Jeſus ſake, for your ſouls ſake, let this be your greateſt care, oh that it may be mine as well as yours, ſee to it that you live before you dye, that you live the life of Grace, before you dye the death of Nature, and then it matters not when, where, how, by what Diſeaſe you dye; you ſhall not dye to dye, but dye to live again, and live to dye no more, but live in the un-interrupted Viſion and interminable fruition of him who is the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the onely wiſe God, the Reſurrection

ſurrection and the Life, the I am, the infinite Being, the All in All. Oh my Friends, let Maſter *Baxters* Counſel and this of mine ſeconding his, let it be acceptable to you and be not ſo cruel to your own ſouls as to neglect ſuch a God, ſuch a Chriſt, ſuch a Goſpel, ſuch a Covenant, and ſuch an Inheritance as is laid up in ſtore for the Saints in Light; who but fools would live without God, without Chriſt, without Faith and Fear, and forgo him and his Chriſt to all Eternity, and be eternally miſerable with Devils and Damned ſouls. After you are dead you muſt have the ſearchers to view your bodies, be you who you will; be you ſearchers to your ſelves and your own Souls, and ſee to it that there be no ſpiritual Feaver Spots, or Plague Spots upon you; If any ſpots, look to it that they be no other then the ſpots of Gods Children; and if you have ſpots, look to it that you be not ſpots, ſuch as *Jude* ſpeaks of; And if the Marks of the Lord Jeſus be upon your ſouls, and not the Mark of the Beaſt and Dragon, whatever Marks and Spots may be found on your Bodies, they may prove Marks of death, but ſhall never prove the Marks of Hell and Damnation: For my part while I am continued on this ſide the Grave, and in Praying-work, my earneſt Prayer for you all ſhall be; that though you may be judged according to men in the Fleſh, yet you may live according to God in the Spirit; and that though your outward Man periſh, that your inward Man may be renewed daily; that though there be a deſtroying

of

of the outward Man, your Souls may be ſaved in the day of our Lord Jeſus.

I have now promiſed to pray for you, and it is my daily work; but be ſure you pray for your ſelves, and make uſe of Chriſts name in your prayers, onely take heed of reſting in a meer Forme as commonly men do, that have learned to ſay, for Jeſus Chriſts ſake do thus and thus; when as (poor ſouls) in the mean time, they know nothing of Chriſt, never cloſed with him in a believing way, never knew any need of him, never had any ſenſe of the burthens of ſin preſſing heavily on their ſouls, and ſo made to cry out after that eaſe and reſt, which he is ſo willing to afford to poor, burthened and heavy laded ſouls, *Mat.* 11. 28. Such poor ignorant ones, Chriſt may ſay to them, upon what account do you make uſe of my name, what hath paſſed between you and me? you and I are yet to begin our acquaintance together, you know not me, nor I you, what have you then to do to take my name into your lips? This then is that which I would perſwade and preſſe you to, acquaint your ſelves with Chriſt and be at peace, as was the counſel given to *Job*, *chap.* 22. The Father is angry, and there is no coming at him but by the ſon, *Oh kiſſe the ſon leaſt he be angry*, as is adviſed, *Pſal.* 2. Kiſſe him with a kiſſe of Faith, a kiſs of Love, a kiſs of Real and Cordial Subjection. Oh do in a ſpiritual way, as the poor woman the ſinner did in a bodily way, but with her heart too, *Luke* 7. Get to the feet of Chriſt and pray, that

if

if you may not have the kiſſes of his mouth, you may have the kiſſes of his feet, hang faſt about him, and touch him with a touch of faith. *Mary Magdalen* was bid not to touch him, and Chriſt gave the reaſon, *For* (ſaith he) *I am not aſcended.* She doted too much upon his bodily preſence, but now he is aſcended, touch him and ſpare not: get you an intereſt in Chriſts perſon, and then uſe his name and improve it to the utmoſt, you have his warrant for it, *John* 16. 24. and you may be bold upon it, and this incouragement you have, *That what you aske in his name, the Father will give it.* It is, as a pretious, ſo a prevailing name: The caſe may ſo ſtand with a people, or perſon, that though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job*; though *Moſes* and *Samuel* who were Gods Favourites, very potent, and prevalent with him, yet could not Gods heart be toward ſuch a people or perſon, nor ſhould they prevail, *Jeremiah* 15. 1. *Ezek.* 14. 14. And it did appear in *Sauls* caſe, on whoſe behalf *Samuel* did very paſſionately intercede but could not prevail, 1 *Sam.* 16. 1. But it was never ſaid by God, nor never ſhall; though Jeſus my Son ſhould ſtand up and plead in the behalf of ſuch or ſuch a ſinner, he ſhould not prevail with me.

This Paper of mine, either in the whole complex, or in the extract, which principally I have wiſhed to you may come, and knock at your doores, and may finde them ſhut upon you, and you ſhut up within them, that Friends cannot come

come to you; If it come, take it in, entertain it friendly; what know you, but Christ who stands at the doore and knocks, may come along with it? Oh, let him be entertained into your Houses, into your Hearts; you will have cause to blesse God to eternity, that ever such a guest came under your Roofes. And so that your *hora novissima*, prove but *hora salutifera salutis*, your last hour may prove an hour of salvation: I wish you no more, no better.

FINIS.